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Reviews.

Laboratory Practice for Beginners in Botany. By William A. Setchell. Macmillan Company. 1897.

The increased attention that has been given to botany in recent years has naturally resulted in greatly adding to our knowledge of plant-life, and the attempt to keep the student in school and university abreast of this information, has necessitated many text-books. So rapidly is the science advancing that what is along the out-post to-day, may become the rear-guard of to-morrow, and teachers in seeking the best methods of imparting information to the students under their charge have often devised plans of presentation that seemed adopted to wider audiences. This little book by Professor Setchell is an example of such conditions. After experimenting with a number of classes of beginners, both in the preparatory schools and in the university, he has come, as he tells us in the preface, to the conclusion that botany should be taught "1. As a science, to cultivate careful and accurate observations, together with the faculty of making from observations the proper inferences; and 2. As a means of leading the mind of the student to interest itself in the phenomena of nature for its own further development and profit." Along these lines the book seems to be fairly well executed. It is devoted almost exclusively to the higher plants, and, beginning with the seed, follows the familiar practise of directing the student's attention to the salient features of plant-organs and plant-phenomena through the complete life cycle. It suggests what the student shall look for, but does not aim to tell what will be seen. The student must reach and record the observations for himself, and will of course be benefited by the process. It will prove a useful book in the grades for which it is intended.

F. H. K.

Botanical Notes.

Fasciation.—Perhaps owing to the unusual amount of rain in New England, there has been this season a frequent manifestation